



MICHIGAN'S RACE TO THE TOP-EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE YEAR 3 HIGHLIGHTS

Michigan had another exciting year in 2016 on its “Race to the Top.” In the past year, the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Great Start and its Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT-ELC) partners made great strides toward the goal of improving access to high quality early learning and development programs statewide. Here are some of the year’s highlights:

- ✓ Three hundred and five unlicensed, subsidized providers participated in training cohorts designed to meet their specific needs. 105 providers completed Level 2 training, nine completed Level 3 training, and one participant achieved licensure.
- ✓ [Great Start to Quality \(GSQ\)](#) Participation Bonuses awarded reached a height of 1,458 in Year 3. This means that more children with high needs, aged 0-5, will have access to high quality programs ensuring that Michigan's early learners are developmentally on track and prepared to succeed in school at the time of school entry.
- ✓ Nine hundred seventy providers received Great Start to Quality Improvement Grants, which give providers financial support to provide better services and learning environments to Michigan's early learners and their families.
- ✓ Provider participation in Great Start to Quality increased to 40% in 2016, up from 20.3% in Year 1, giving Michigan families greater access to high quality programs and giving providers access to more resources.
- ✓ Through the development of the early childhood professional development registry, Michigan has taken the first step in giving early childhood educators a way to track their professional progress. The registry will provide a statewide training calendar and will also allow Michigan to have a clearer picture of the early childhood workforce.
- ✓ To further strengthen the GSQ System quality indicators, an evaluation comparing GSQ standards to national health and safety standards was completed, resulting in recommendations for GSQ indicators and child care licensing rules.
- ✓ The RTT-ELC Family Engagement Specialist joined the team and began forwarding the work of improving the engagement of Michigan families in the education of their young children through family engagement consultants and trusted advisors.

- ✓ Staff trainings to increase family engagement were held for Pathways to Potential communities.
- ✓ Key licensing indicators were developed, in partnership with the [Department of Licensing and Regulatory affairs \(LARA\)](#), as an early step toward streamlining the child care licensing process with plans for piloting in Q1 2017. Expected benefits of the key licensing indicators include more efficient monitoring time for both licensing consultants and providers, and improved ability to focus on assisting programs with quality improvements to meet licensing requirements.
- ✓ Thanks to the [Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children \(MiAEOYC\)](#), eligible providers received a total of 556 [T.E.A.C.H. scholarships](#), including 152 scholarships to home-based providers and 404 scholarships to providers seeking certification to teach in [Great Start Readiness Programs](#).
- ✓ RTT-ELC partner the [Center for Educational Performance and Information \(CEPI\)](#) successfully completed a Unique Identification Code (UIC) pilot with eight Head Start grantee volunteers, which resulted in simplification and streamlining of the UIC request process.
- ✓ The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) created two more reports, “Pathways to Kindergarten” and “Early Childhood Impact on K-3 Absenteeism,” both of which will be released on the Early Childhood section of the [MI School Data website](#) in early 2017.
- ✓ The partnering team at the [Michigan Department of Health and Human Services \(MDHHS\)](#) welcomed a Social and Emotional Health Coordinator, and hired and trained several Social and Emotional Health consultants, with eight already deployed to support the social and emotional health needs of Michigan's earliest learners.
- ✓ To further strengthen the Great Start to Quality System quality indicators, an evaluation comparing GSQ standards to national health and safety standards was completed, resulting in recommendations for GSQ indicators and child care licensing rules.

...and there is more to come! Michigan will continue racing to the top to ensure that all of the state’s youngest learners have greater access to high quality early learning and development.

Learn more about the Michigan Department of Education’s Office of Great Start, its partners, and its mission to improve access to high quality early learning and development programs through the Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge grant by visiting the [grant website](#) or by [liking us on Facebook](#).